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Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 20 (see A/73/538, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 23rd and 26th meetings, on 8 and 30 November 2018. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records.[1]

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/73/L.28 and A/C.2/73/L.43

2. At the 23rd meeting, on 8 November, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the States members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/73/L.28).

3. At its 26th meeting, on 30 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/73/L.43), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Mehdi Remaoun (Algeria), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.28.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.43 had no programme budget implications.

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 12 parts, under the symbols A/73/538, A/73/538/Add.1, A/73/538/Add.2, A/73/538/Add.3, A/73/538/Add.4, A/73/538/Add.5, A/73/538/Add.6, A/73/538/Add.7, A/73/538/Add.8, A/73/538/Add.9, A/73/538/Add.10 and A/73/538/Add.11.

[1] A/C.2/73/SR.23 and A/C.2/73/SR.26.

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5. Also at the same meeting, the facilitator of the draft resolution (Mexico) made a statement and orally revised draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.43 by deleting operative paragraph 19.[2]

6. Also at its 26th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.43, as orally revised (see para. 9).

7. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Austria, on behalf of the States members of the European Union, and the United States of America.

8. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.43, draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.28 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

[2] See A/C.2/73/SR.26.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

9. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008, 64/73 of 7 December 2009, 65/159 of 20 December 2010, 66/200 of 22 December 2011, 67/210 of 21 December 2012, 68/212 of 20 December 2013, 69/220 of 19 December 2014, 70/205 of 22 December 2015, 71/228 of 21 December 2016 and 72/219 of 20 December 2017 and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of humankind,

Recalling also the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] and the Paris Agreement adopted under the Convention,[2] acknowledging that they are the primary international, intergovernmental forums for negotiating the global response to climate change, expressing determination to address decisively the threat posed by climate change and environmental degradation, recognizing that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible international cooperation aimed at accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions and addressing adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change, and noting with concern the significant gap between the aggregate effect of parties' mitigation pledges, in particular their nationally determined contributions, as appropriate, and aggregate emission pathways,

Recalling further the Paris Agreement, which, pursuant to article 2, paragraph 2, thereof, will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Acknowledging that action on adaptation to climate change is an urgent priority and a global challenge faced by all countries, in particular developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, recognizing that the current need for adaptation is significant and that greater levels of mitigation can reduce the need for additional adaptation efforts, and bearing in mind that the provision of scaled-up financial resources should aim to achieve a balance between adaptation and mitigation,

Welcoming the convening of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018,

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[4] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),[5] the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[6] the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want",[7] the outcomes of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011,[8] the Political Declaration of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, held in Antalya, Turkey, from 27 to 29 May 2016,[9] the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Vienna from 3 to 5 November 2014,[10] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[11] the Mauritius Declaration[12] and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[13] the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway,[14] the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,[15] the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[16] and the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016,[17]

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest

[3] Resolution 55/2.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] Resolution 60/1.

[7] Resolution 66/288, annex.

[8] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. II.

[9] Resolution 70/294, annex.

[10] Resolution 69/137, annex II.

[11] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[12] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10–14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[13] Ibid., annex II.

[14] Resolution 69/15, annex.

[15] Resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.

[16] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[17] Resolution 71/256, annex.

global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Noting with concern the findings contained in the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty,

Taking note of the Green Climate Fund and its initial resource mobilization process, making it the largest dedicated climate fund, and its approval of 4.6 billion United States dollars in funding to support the implementation of 93 climate change adaptation and mitigation projects and programmes in 96 developing countries, reiterating the objectives and guiding principles of the Fund, including a gender-sensitive approach in its process and operations, stressing its goal of ensuring efficient access to its resources through simplified approval procedures and enhancing readiness support, which will help to deliver outcomes in developing countries so as to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help them adapt to the impacts of climate change, recognizing that the Board of the Fund decided to launch the process for the first formal replenishment, and emphasizing the importance of having a timely, well-managed and successful process so that the Fund continues to be one of the main channels to enable the flow of financial resources to developing countries under the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Recalling the United Nations strategic plan for forests, 2017–2030, [18] and acknowledging that all types of forests contribute substantially to climate change mitigation and adaptation,

Noting that forests are addressed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and noting also article 5 of the Paris Agreement,

Noting the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation at all levels among the parties to and secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, [19] and the Convention on Biological Diversity, [20] as appropriate, while respecting their individual mandates,

Noting also the contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to addressing the challenge of, inter alia, climate change, within its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant organizations and stakeholders,

[18] See resolution 71/285.

[19] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[20] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

Recalling its resolution 71/312 of 6 July 2017, entitled "Our ocean, our future: call for action",

Recognizing that, in undertaking its work, the United Nations should promote the protection of the global climate for the well-being of present and future generations of humankind,

Welcoming the entry into force on 1 January 2019 of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer,[21] welcoming also its ratification by 59 countries and one regional economic integration organization, while encouraging further ratifications as soon as possible, and welcoming further the Thirtieth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, held from 5 to 9 November 2018 in Quito,

Noting the contribution of the International Civil Aviation Organization to global efforts to combat climate change, and noting also the contribution of the International Maritime Organization in this regard,

1. *Reaffirms* that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, expresses profound alarm that the emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise globally, remains deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing an increase in such impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, land degradation, sea level rise, coastal erosion, ocean acidification and the retreat of mountain glaciers, further threatening food security, water availability and livelihoods, and efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and achieve sustainable development, recognizes the substantial risks posed by climate change to health, and emphasizes in this regard that mitigation of and adaptation to climate change represent an immediate and urgent global priority;

2. *Welcomes* the first two sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change after the adoption of the Paris Agreement,[2] including the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties, presided over by the Government of Fiji, in Bonn, Germany, from 6 to 17 November 2017, and the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, hosted by the Government of Morocco in Marrakech, from 7 to 18 November 2016;

3. *Also welcomes* the Paris Agreement and its early entry into force, on 4 November 2016, encourages all parties to the Agreement to fully implement the Agreement and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible, and highlights the synergies between the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[22] and the Paris Agreement;

4. *Recalls* that the Paris Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change, increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner

[21] UNEP/OzL.Pro.28/12, annex I.

[22] Resolution 70/1.

that does not threaten food production, and making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development;

5. *Welcomes* the nationally determined contributions submitted to date, and recalls that the regular updating of such contributions will reflect the highest possible level of ambition, in the light of different national circumstances, and provide the information necessary for clarity, transparency and understanding, in accordance with the relevant decisions;

6. *Notes with concern* that the nationally determined contributions presented thus far by the parties to the Paris Agreement are not sufficient to achieve the long-term temperature goal in article 2, paragraph 1(a), of the Agreement;

7. *Urges* the completion of the Paris Agreement work programme at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and recognizes the importance of the facilitative dialogue of 2018, known as the Talanoa Dialogue, at the twenty-fourth session as an opportunity to take stock of the collective efforts of parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goal referred to in article 2, paragraph 1, of the Agreement and to inform the preparation of nationally determined contributions;

8. *Emphasizes* the need for collective efforts to promote sustainable development in its three dimensions in an innovative, coordinated, environmentally sound, open and shared manner;

9. *Underlines* the need to address the economic, social and environmental impacts of climate change, and emphasizes the need for action at all levels to enhance efforts to build resilience through, inter alia, the sustainable management of ecosystems, and to build resilience to reduce the impacts and costs of natural disasters;

10. *Recognizes* that enhanced access to international climate finance is important to support mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and also recognizes the ongoing efforts in this regard;

11. *Acknowledges* the work undertaken under the auspices of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action,[23] and encourages non-party stakeholders to scale up their efforts to address and respond to climate change;

12. *Looks forward* to the climate summit called for by the Secretary-General, to be held in New York in 2019, to accelerate global action on climate change;

13. *Also looks forward* to the convening by the President of the General Assembly of the high-level meeting during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly on the issue of the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of humankind in the context of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

14. *Reiterates* the resolve of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, as set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of its decision 1/CP.19, to accelerate the full implementation of the decisions constituting the agreed outcome pursuant to its decision 1/CP.13[25] and to enhance ambition in the pre-2020 period in order to ensure the highest possible mitigation efforts under the Convention by all parties;

15. *Welcomes* the further acceptance or ratification of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol[26] by 117 countries, up from 95 countries one year ago, expressed

[23] See FCCC/CP/2016/10/Add.1.
[24] See FCCC/CP/2013/10/Add.1.
[25] See FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1.
[26] See FCCC/KP/CMP/2012/13/Add.1.

concern that the Doha Amendment has not yet entered into force, and welcomes the efforts of those parties that are already implementing the Doha amendment prior to its entry into force;

16. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;[27]

17. *Recognizes* the importance for all countries of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events, and the role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage, and in that regard takes note of the establishment of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, relevant consecutive decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention as well as article 8 of the Paris Agreement;

18. *Notes with appreciation* the hosting by the Government of Poland of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018;

19. *Urges* Member States, taking into account that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by climate change owing to gender inequalities and the dependence of many women on natural resources for their livelihoods, to promote the integration of a gender perspective into environmental and climate change policies and to strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources towards achieving the full and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, and stresses the need to address the challenges posed by climate change that affect women and girls in particular, including through the implementation of the first gender action plan adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-third session, with a view to advancing towards the goal of mainstreaming a gender perspective into climate action;

20. *Recalls* the action plan for integrating sustainable development practices into Secretariat-wide operations and facilities management submitted by the Secretary-General[28] and endorsed in resolution 72/219, and requests the Secretary-General to report on its implementation and improvements achieved to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session;

21. *Notes* the ongoing work and potential of the local communities and indigenous peoples platform of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, established for the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner, and recalls decision 2/CP.23 of the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the platform's purpose and functions;

22. *Invites* the secretariat of the Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and decides to include, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fourth session, unless otherwise agreed.

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[27] A/73/255, sect. I.

[28] A/72/82.